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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EA-06 IO-10 SAM-01 AID-05 EB-07 CIEP-01

TRSE-00 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 COME-00 ACDA-05 ERDA-05

NRC-05 BIB-01 CU-02 OES-03 /116 W
---------- 058205
R 051125Z JUN 75
FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1287
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PROP, XG, XC, UR, US
SUBJECT: SOVIET PROPAGANDIST ON DETENTE, U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS

REF: LENINGRAD 0844

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. THE OPPONENTS OF DETENTE ARE SAID TO BE GETTING STRONGER, ALLEGING THAT ONLY SOVIET UNION BENEFITS AND DEMANDING SOVIET CONCESSIONS. PREVIOUS PROBLEMS OF FORD ADMINISTRATION OVER STATE OF ECONOMY ARE DESCRIBED AS NOW COMPOUNDED BY NEW FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS, CHIEFLY COLLAPSE OF U.S. AIMS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. RECENT CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS ARE SAID TO INDICATE A SERIOUS DECLINE IN PRESIDENTIAL POWER. BUT, ALTHOUGH "VICTORY IN VIETNAM" IS DESCRIBED EUPHORICALLY AND AS A CAUSE OF A "CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE" IN THE U.S. ON PART OF EUROPEANS, IT IS ALSO SAID TO IMPROVE PROSPECTS FOR U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS. PRESIDENT FORD IS CREDITED WITH STRONGLY SUPPORTING DETENTE, BUT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE SCHLESINGER IS BLASTED FOR "PROVOCATIVE STATEMENT" ON POSSIBLE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN EUROPE. END SUMMARY.

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2. LENINGRAD ZNANIYE (KNOWLEDGE) SOCIETY PROPAGANDIST DEVOTED MUCH OF LENGTHY PREPARED PRESENTATION EVENING JUNE 4 TO TOPIC OF

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DETENTE AND U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS (MIDDLE EAST PORTION REPORTED SEPARATELY). SPEAKER WAS YURIY FEDOROVICH SMIRNOV. FOLLOWING IS ACCOUNT OF HIS PITCH, WHICH BEGAN WITH OBSERVATION THAT HE WOULD BE DISCUSSING "A FEW PROBLEMS WE HAVE WITH THE UNITED STATES."

3. DETENTE. MAIN TENDENCY IN PRESENT INTERNATIONAL SITUATION REMAINS STRENGTHENING AND DEEPENING OF DETENTE. THIS SHOWN BY (A) BREZHNEV'S MEETINGS WITH MAIN WESTERN LEADERS; (B) SOON-FORTH-COMING COMPLETION OF CSCE; (C) DEMOCRATIC ANTI-FACIST REVOLUTION IN PORTUGAL; (D) STRENGTHENING OF WORLD LIBERATION MOVEMENT; (E) "WONDERFUL SUCCESSES" IN SOUTHEAST ASIA; (F) EASING OF BLOCKADE OF CUBA. BUT OPPONENTS OF DETENTE HAVE SHARPENED STRUGGLE SINCE STATED SUCCESSES HAVE AROUSED COUNTERACTION. EUROPEAN AND U.S. CRICLES EXPRESS MISTRUST OF SOVIET DIPLOMACY, FED BY MAOIST PROPAGANDA, AND SAY ONLY SOVIETS BENEFIT. SENATOR JACKSON AND HIS GROUPING VERY ACTIVE. TYPICAL OF OPPONENTS IS ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI - CONSIDERED BY MANY TO BE KISSINGER'S SUCCESSOR AS SECSTATE -- WHO ADVOCATES PRESSURE ON USSR IN ORDER TO OBTAIN CONCESSIONS. AND CHINESE LINE THAT SOVIET DETENTE POLICY IS TRICKERY IS USED BY U.S. IMPERIALISTS AGAINST SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.

4. U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS. U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS VERY IMPORTANT FOR WORLD SECURITY AND PEACE. FORD ADMINISTRATION NOW VERY OCCUPIED WITH PROBLEMS IN FOREIGN POLICY AS WELL AS PREVIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. THESE ARE: (A) QUICK COLLAPSE OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND CAMBODIAN REGIMES -- "EVEN USSR HAD ASSUMED" THAT AREA WOULD NOT COLLAPSE SO FAST WITH CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT -- JUST LIKE HOUSE OF CARDS; (B) FAILURE OF KISSINGER'S ME MISSION; (C) WEAKENING OF NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK DUE TO TURKISH-GREEK DIFFERENCES OVER CYPRUS; (D) PORTUGAL; (E) THAILAND'S DEMANDS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. FORCES AND BASES. ALL THESE PROBLEMS HIT U.S. LIKE HURRICANE AND U.S. ADMINISTRATION HAS REACTED WITH REAPPRAISAL OF POLICIES IN SEA AND ME.

-- VICTORY IN VIETNAM WAS ENORMOUS EVENT, A RESULT OF CONSISTENT SUPPORT AND AID FROM SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY SOVIET UNION. DESPITE COLOSSAL LOSSES OF MONEY AND MEN, FORD ADMINISTRATION HAD CONTINUED TO AID SAIGON REGIME, PRESSURING CONGRESS TO GIVE
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MORE MILITARY ASSISTANCE. FORD SAID AFTER CONGRESSIONAL DEFEAT OF REQUEST THAT HE MADE IT AS A MORAL OBLIGATION TO SAIGON. DEFEAT SHOWS SERIOUS DECLINE IN PRESIDENTIAL POWERS JUST AS DID EARLIER CONGRESSIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON PRESIDENT'S ABILITY TO CONDUCT MILITARY ACTIONS IN SEA. KISSINGER HIMSELF CORRECTLY NOTED THAT LESSON FROM THIS IS THAT U.S. SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL IN GIVING ITS COMMITMENTS. ALTHOUGH FEELING OF ISOLATIONISM INCREASING IN U.S., KISSINGER ALSO SAID WASHINGTON WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN ITS EXISTING COMMITMENTS. VICTORY IN SVN SERIOUSLY CHANGED BALANCE OF POWER IN SEA WITH 42 MILLION VIETNAMESE PEOPLE

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NOW STRONGEST FORCE IN AREA. U.S. WILL REDUCE ITS PRESENCE IN
PACIFIC AREA, BUT HAS SAID IT WILL CONTINUE SUPPORT SOUTH
KOREA.

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--EUROPEAN ALLIES OF U.S. DID NOT DRAMATIZE U.S. DEFEAT IN SEA.
THEY LONG KNEW THAT U.S. HAD LOST AND NOW FEEL U.S. CAN CONCENTRATE
MORE ON IMPORTANT EUROPEAN MATTERS AND ME AND, TRULY, U.S.
DIPLOMACY NOW DOING MUCH MORE IN EUROPE, E.G. FORD'S VISIT,
BRUSSELS SUMMIT. SOME CONGRESSIONAL OPPONENTS OF DETENTE USE
VIETNAM AND SOVIET AID TO HANOI TO FIGHT FULFILLMENT OF U.S.-
SOVIET AGREEMENTS; BUT VICTORY IN VIETNAM ACTUALLY IMPROVED
PROSPECTS FOR U.S.- SOVIET RELATIONS. KISSINGER IS RIGHT WHEN HE
SAYS ONE CANNOT BLAME RUSSIANS FOR ALL U.S. DEFEATS AND
DIFFICULTIES. PRESIDENT FORD STRONGLY SUPPORTED DETENTE IN MAY
23 INTERVIEW WITH SUNDAY TIMES, SAYING IT MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS
AND BASIS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS.

-- ECONOMIC AND EVEN POLITICAL RELATIONS WERE "SLOWED SOMEWHAT"
BY CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON TRADE AND CREDITS, BUT ONLY U.S. LOSES
SINCE SOVIETS CAN TRADE WITH OTHERS.

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--THERE IS NOW CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE IN U.S. IN MANY AREAS OF
EUROPEAN OPINION. ONE EUROPEAN COMMENTATOR OBSERVED THAT EUROPE
DOES NOT SEE NIXON'S SUCCESSOR AS STRONG LEADER IN INTERNATIONAL
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AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. WHITE HOUSE WANTED TO USE MAYAGUEZ
INCIDENT AS SIGNAL, BUT COMMENTATORS HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT U.S.
PRESTIGE REALLY LOW IF SO MUCH POWER USED BY BIG STATE AGAINST
SUCH A SMALL ONE. U.S. WANTED TO USE RECENT NATO MEETINGS TO
CONVINCE PARTNERS OF U.S. STRENGTH AND RESOLVE POST-VIETNAM.
FORD OFFERED AS PROOF OF THIS CONGRESSIONAL OPINION ON NOT
REDUCING TROOP LEVELS. SCHLESINGER EVEN SAID TWO MORE BRIGADES
WOULD BE SENT TO EUROPE. SCHLESINGER ALSO JUST MADE "PROVOCATIVE
STATEMENT" TO CONGRESS ABOUT USING NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN EUROPE.
"AN AMERICAN OF THAT STANDING SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL WITH HIS
WORDS."

-SOVIET VIEW OF U.S. BICENTENNIAL IS THAT IT IS PURELY INTERNAL
U.S. MATTER. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME ACHIEVEMENTS IN 200 YEARS,
BUT USSR WILL BE AGAINST ALL ASPECTS OF IMPERIALSIM AND SO-
CALLED DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.

-- BREZHNEV'S VISIT TO U.S. IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH SUCCESS
OF STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS. AT THIS LEVEL OF VISIT THERE
MUST BE FIRM BASIS. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT VISIT WOULD OCCUR WITH-
OUT SUCH AGREEMENT, BUT WE ARE CONVINCED IT WILL BE SIGNED.
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